

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07 AGRE-00
AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00
DLOS-09 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 ERDA-05
FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-01 OES-06 OMB-01 PA-01
PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 FPC-01 STR-04
/138 W

-----011301Z 100299 /45

R 311604Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6258

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

CINCUSNAVEUR

COMSIXTHFLT

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 2231

CINCUSNAVEUR PASS POLAD

H

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PLOS,PBOR, LY, IT, TS

SUBJ: POSSIBLE TUNISIAN EXPLORATORY WELL IN DISPUTED
AREA OF CONTINENTAL SHELF

REF: TUNIS 2049, 2107, 2164, AND 76 TUNIS 5339 (NOTAL)

1. PRESIDENT AMOR ROUROU OF ETAP (TUNISIAN STATE OIL COMPANY)
TOLD EMBASSY OFFICER MARCH 30 THAT EXPLORATORY WELL BEING CON-
TEMPLATED BY GOT FOR DRILLING BY NORWEGIAN SHIP WOULD BE AT
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SAME SITE (KAHINA NO. 1: CORR DINATES 33 DEPGREES 51 MINUTES
35 SECONDS N, 12 DEGREES 03 MINUTES 15 SECONDS E) IN DISPUTED
AREA WHERE AMERICAN FIRMS WERE TO DRILL LAST SPRING
FOR ETAP WITHIN ITS SUD ORIENTAL DU GOLFE DE GABES PERMIT
AREA. (SITE IS ADJACENT TO ELF-AQUITAINE LIBYA DISCOVERY WELL
B1A-137; COORDINATES 33 DEGREES 51 MINUTES 41 SECONDS N, 12 DE-
GREES 04 MINUTES 24 SECONDS E). ROUROU SAID, HOWEVER, THAT

NO REPEAT NO FINAL DECISION HAS BEEN MADE TO PROCEED WITH THIS WELL.

2. ROUROU MADE CLEAR THAT NORWEGIAN DRILLING SHIP, WHICH HE SAID IS IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE BUT NOT YET IN ROUTE, WOULD ACT IN SERVICE CAPACITY FOR ETAP AS ODECO RIG CONTRACTED TO BUTTES' WOULD HAVE DONE LAST YEAR IF ODECO HAD NOT CANCELLED OUT ON GROUNDS OF POLITICAL AND PHYSICAL RISK (76 TUNIS 5339).

3. EARLIER IN DAY ANOTHER GOT OFFICIAL KNOWLEDGEABLE ON ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS HAD TOLD EMBASSY OFFICER THAT "VERY HIGH LEVEL" OFFICIAL OF GOT HAD DECIDED THAT NORWEGIAN DRILLING VESSEL, BELONGING TO STROM DRILLING COMPANY, WOULD DRILL WELL ON OLD SITE NEAR LIBYAN BUOYS, BUT "HIGHEST POLITICAL AUTHORITY" HAD OVERRULED DECISION.

4. SAME OFFICIAL SPECULATED THAT NORWEGIAN RIG NOW MIGHT BE INTENDED FOR DRILLING IN NORTHERN PORTION OF ETAP BLOCK. ROUROU SAID THIS WAS NOT THE CASE AND REASSURED EMBASSY OFFICER THAT NORWEGIAN CONTRACT DRILLING FOR ETAP AT SITE NEAR LIBYAN BUOYS --IF IT IS CARRIED OUT-- WOULD IN NO WAY JEOPARDIZE BUTTES' POTENTIAL INTEREST IN JOINT VENTURE WITH ETAP IN NORTHERN PORTION OF BLOCK. LATTER AREA, HE OBSERVED, APPEARED SAFELY WITHIN UNDISPUTED TUNISIAN TERRITORY. (BUTTES' OFFICIALS INCLUDING VICE-PRESIDENT WILLIAM BASSINGER ARE EXPECTED IN TUNIS THIS WEEK AND ROUROU SAID POSSIBLE ACTIVITY IN NORTHERN PORTION OF BLOCK IS ONE ITEM ON AGENDA FOR THEIR DISCUSSIONS WITH EATP.

5. BOTH ROUROU AND OTHER OFFICIAL EMPHASIZED THAT QUESTION OF CONFIDENTIAL

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DRILLING IN ETAP BLOCK WAS MATTER OF HIGH GOVERNMENT POLICY. ROUROU ACKNOWLEDGED THAT, OUTSIDE OF ETAP BLOCK WHERE GOT CAN DICTATE EXPLORATION DECISIONS, GOT IS PRESSING PRIVATE HOLDERS OF PERMITS TO INCREASE ACTIVITY NEAR DISPUTED BOUNDARY. HE SAID GOT HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY DISAPPOINTED AT LOW-LEVEL OF ACTIVITY BY SEPEG GROUP (ELF-AQUITAINE) IN ITS GOLFE DE GABES ORIENTALE PERMIT AREA AND MIGHT LOP OFF MORE SOUTHERLY PORTION OF AREA FOR DIRECT OPERATION BY ETAP IF SEPEG IS UNWILLING TO WORK THERE.

6. COMMENT: REMARKS OF TUNISIAN OIL MEN, TOGETHER WITH THOSE OF TOTAL OFFICIAL (TUNIS 2164), PERSUADE US THAT LOCATION OF PROSPECTIVE WELL MENTIONED MARCH 25 BY DEFENSE MINISTER FARHAT WOULD BE IN ETAP AREA ROUGHLY 30 NAUTICAL MILES WEST SOUTHWEST (RATHER THAN DUE NORTH) OF POSITION OF SCARABEO IV. MULCAHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CONTINENTAL SHELF, FOREIGN RELATIONS, EXPLORATORY DRILLING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770112-0446
Format: TEL
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977031/aaaaaiv.tel
Line Count: 113
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSSIBLE TUNISIAN EXPLORATORY WELL IN DISPUTED AREA OF CONTINENTAL SHELF
TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, PBOR, LY, IT, TS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f28607ac-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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